

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-14

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DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 AID-20 SR-02

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R 252024Z MAR 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

USSAGE NKP

CINCPAC

COGARD

XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

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COGARD FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT:MARCH 25 EA PRESS SUMMARY

INDOCHINA

1. THOUSANDS OF MONKS GATHER IN PP STADIUM TO PROTEST
HEAVY DAMAGE TO HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS SITES IN
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LOUDONG; APPEAL TO REBELS TO END LOUDONG OCCUPATION
TO PREVENT FURTHER DESTRUCTION AS FANK CLOSES IN,
AND MANY BANNERS DECLARE "WE WANT PEACE." GKR COMMAND
SAYS FANK TASK FORCE APPROACHING LOUDONG FROM EAST

MAKES STEADY GAINS AND EXPECTS TO LINK UP SOON WITH ENCIRCLED GARRISON HALF-MILE TO NE, WHILE TASK FORCE NORTH OF CITY REPORTS ALMOST NO PROGRESS. GRUNK BROADCAST FROM HANOI SAYS 3700 GKR SOLDIERS KIA, WIA OR CAPTURED AND 1500 SWITCHED SIDES AT OUDONG (AP NYT, SUN).

2. AFP DAKAR QUOTES SIHANOUK'S MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND YOUTH THAT OF 60 COUNTRIES WITH DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH GRUNK, 30 ARE IN AFRICA (WP).

3. DRV'S PHAN VAN DONG IN HAVANA BEGINS TALKS WITH CASTRO AND CUBAN POLITBURO IN "FRIENDLY, COURTEOUS ATMOSPHERE" (WP).

4. MCCOMBS (WP) FROM SVN TOWN NEAR KHMER BORDER REPORTS THAT AT LEAST THREE "RELIABLE AND INDEPENDENT SOURCES" CONFIRM THAT ARVN CROSS-BORDER OPERATION TOOK PLACE LAST AUGUST IN VIOLATION OF C-F, DESPITE DENIAL BY ARVN SPOKESMAN. SAYS GVN IS "PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE ON SUCH QUESTIONS NOW" BECAUSE OF US CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF MIL AID AND THE USES TO WHICH IT IS PUT. SOURCES SAY THAT SECRET BATTALION-SIZED OPERATION WAS TO SUPPORT GKR TROOPS IN BORDER AREA, WHO HAD BEEN ASSISTED BY USAF BUT RETREATED FOLLOWING BOMBING HALT; BUT HE CANNOT DETERMINE WHETHER INTERVENTION WAS REQUESTED BY PP OR UNILATERALLY UNDERTAKEN BY GVN. IN END, "COMMUNISTS WON, DRIVING BOTH FORCES... INTO SVN" WHERE BATTERED FANK TROOPS WENT TO PP BY BOAT. LOCAL PEOPLE STATE THAT COMMUNISTS REGULARLY SHELL SVN FROM ACROSS BORDER AND ARVN ANSWERS IN KIND. KHMER REFUGEES SAY RELATIONS BETWEEN "KHMER ROUGE" AND NVA NEAR BORDER CONTINUE TO BE STRAINED. MCCOMBS ASCRIBES THIS CHIEFLY TO "DEEP-SEATED RACIAL AND CULTURAL ANIMOSITIES" BETWEEN KHMER AND VIET, WHICH MAKES ARVN AID TO FANK "ALL THE MORE INTERESTING."

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CHINA

5. TIMES OF LONDON DISPATCH FROM PEKING SAYS RECENT DIVERSION OF TRAVELERS FROM WUHAN SUGGESTS SERIOUS PROBLEMS THERE, PRESUMABLY OF POLITICAL NATURE. FOREIGNER TRAVELING BETWEEN CANTON AND PEKING REPORTED HIS TRAIN DIVERTED VIA NANKING; ALSO, GROUP OF POLISH INDUSTRIAL TECHNICIANS WAS REFUSED PERMISSION AT LAST MOMENT TO CARRY OUT SCHEDULED VISIT TO WUHAN FACTORY. WHILE RECENT RUMORS OF WUHAN UNREST TOO NUMEROUS TO BE IGNORED, POSSIBLE THAT RAIL PROBLEMS CAUSED BY ACCIDENT ON LINE (NYT).

KOREA

6. NK FM HO DAM IN REPORT TO SUPREME PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY CALLED MONDAY FOR TALKS WITH US ON CONCLUSION OF BILATERAL PEACE ACCORD TO REPLACE EXISTING MILITARY ARMISTICE AGREEMENT, NK NEWS AGENCY REPORTS (REUTER, WP).

JAPAN

7. WSJ NOTES HODGSON NOMINATION AS US ENVOY TO JAPAN.

8. TWO LABOR FEDERATIONS ORDER STRIKE BY SOME 2.5

MILLION WORKERS TUESDAY FOR INCREASED GOVT. AID TO NEEDY, RESTORATION OF PUBLIC WORKERS' RIGHT TO STRIKE AND PAY INCREASES (AFP, WP; UPI, NYDN).

9. WSJ PEARLSTINE REPORTS THAT DURING JAN.-FEB. 1,746 JAPANESE COMPANIES FILED FOR BANKRUPTCY, LEAVING DEBTS EQUIVALENT OF ABOUT 656 MILLION DOLS; IN FIRST TWO MONTHS 1973, BY CONTRAST, ONLY 943 FIRMS WENT BANKRUPT, OWING 244 MILLION DOLS.

10. MITSUBISHI AIRCRAFT INTERNATIONAL IN SAN ANGELO, TEXAS, IS ONE OF WORLD'S LARGEST MANUFACTURERS OF SMALL JETS. OF 437-MEMBER MAI WORK FORCE, ONLY TEN ARE JAPANESE (AP, NYT).

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11. TREASURY DEPT. BEGINS PROBE WHETHER JAPANESE NONPOWERED HAND TOOLS ARE BEING DUMPED IN US; ABOUT 37 MILLION DOLS WORTH IMPORTED FROM JAPAN LAST YEAR (WSJ).

AUSTRALIA

12. NYT DISPATCH OBSERVES HOW AUSSIES TAKE LABOR STRIKES IN STRIDE. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES ARE SUCH REGULAR FEATURE OF DAILY LIFE THAT DECLINE IN STRIKES IN DEC. RATED COVERAGE IN NATIONAL PRESS.

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

CHINA

13. SUN'S WU IN HONG KONG CITES NCNA THAT NO AGREEMENT REACHED AT 19TH MEETING (FEB. 5-MARCH 21) OF SINO-SOVIET JOINT COMMISSION FOR NAVIGATION ON BOUNDARY RIVERS HELD IN BLAGOVESHCHENSK. ESTABLISHED IN 1951, COMMISSION MEETS ANNUALLY TO DISCUSS NAVIGATIONAL PROBLEMS RELATING TO BOUNDARY WATERWAYS OF HEILUNG,

USSURI, ARGUN AND SUGACHA RIVERS AND LAKE HSINGKAI. COMMISSION NOT EMPOWERED TO DEAL WITH BROADER BORDER ISSUES, ALTHOUGH USSURI AND HEILUNG RIVERS WERE SCENES OF FIGHTING IN 1969. BUT WORK OF THIS LOW-LEVEL JOINT COMMISSION, HANDLING TECHNICAL MATTERS WHICH NORMALLY CAN BE RESOLVED EASILY, OFTEN REFLECTS PROGRESS, OR LACK OF PROGRESS, OF SUBSTANTIVE BORDER TALKS HELD IN PEKING BETWEEN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTERS OF TWO SIDES. LEADERS OF BOTH SIDES HAVE BEEN SAYING PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY THAT PEKING BORDER MEETINGS NOT MAKING ANY HEADWAY, EACH BLAMING

OTHER FOR DEADLOCK. WU ALSO RECOUNTS CHINESE AND SOVIET VERSIONS OF INCIDENT OF SOVIET HELICOPTER DOWN IN SINKIANG.

14. FROM PEKING, GLOBE AND MAIL'S BURNS CITES DELIVERY TO CANADIAN EMBASSY OF FIRST OF MANY EXPECTED APPLICATIONS UNCLASSIFIED

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FOR EMIGRATION AS ONE GOOD INDICATOR THAT AROUSED PRC POLITICAL PASSIONS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO INTERFERE WITH "GENERALLY HAPPY STATE" OF RELATIONS WITH WESTERN COUNTRIES. PRC AND CANADA ARE NEGOTIATING FOR ALL KINDS OF EXCHANGES, AND CANADIAN DIPLOMAT FORESEES NO PROBLEMS; CHINESE HAVE BEEN EVEN MORE COOPERATIVE THAN IN THE PAST (WP).

15. LOOKING INTERNALLY, HOWEVER, NYT'S LELYVELD REPORTS ATTACKS ON "REACTIONARIES AT HOME AND ABROAD" FOR STRIVING TO "ATTACK, SLANDER AND SABOTAGE" MOVEMENT TO REVIVE VALUES OF GPCR. THIS, HE NOTES, ACCOMPANIED SLOGANS PRAISING "REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE" AND "REVOLUTIONARY REBELLION". TO ANALYSTS IN HK THE WEEK'S MOST REVEALING HINT OF MOVEMENT'S POSSIBLE FUTURE COURSE SEEMED EMBODIED IN CAREFULLY HANDLED FRONT PAGE PHOTO IN PEOPLES DAILY OF VISITING AUSSIE COMMUNIST DELEGATION. CHIANG CHING APPEARS BETWEEN VISITORS, WITH CHOU EN-LAI AND CHANG CHUN-CH'IAO OFF TO EITHER SIDE. SOME INTERPRETERS THOUGHT THIS WAS MEANT TO DISSIPATE RUMORS OF LEADERSHIP SPLIT; TO OTHERS IT CONFIRMED IMPRESSION THAT NEW LEADERSHIP RANKING MIGHT BE EMERGING.

KOREA

16. CHITRIB'S KIRK, IN SEOUL, SEES NATURE OF ROKG CONFRONTING US WITH CLASSIC FOREIGN POLICY QUESTION -- HOW TO JUSTIFY SUPPORT FOR ANTI-COMMUNIST REGIME THAT IS "CRUELLY OPPRESSIVE, DICTATORIAL AND CORRUPT." SAYS WHILE US OFFICIALS "CAN REPLY LOOSELY, IN BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS AND THE LIKE," THAT PRESENCE OF 40,000

US TROOPS IN SK IS JUSTIFIED BY TREATY COMMITMENTS, IN INTEREST OF WESTERN PACIFIC SECURITY AND THAT SK CITIZENS HAVE RELATIVE "FREEDOM" COMPARED TO PEOPLE OF NK, "SUCH ANSWERS ARE NOT VERY CONVINCING" FOR MANY UNOFFICIAL AMERICANS WHO HAVE BEEN ANALYZING SK FOR LAST FEW YEARS. AS FOR POINT ABOUT SECURITY, QUESTIONS CAN BE ASKED WHETHER US WOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER FIGHTING WAR TO SAVE SK FROM INVASION, OR WHETHER NK COULD REALLY INVADE AGAIN AT TIME WHEN UNCLASSIFIED

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KISSINGER "HAS SO SKILLFULLY MANAGED TO PLAY OFF"

SOVIET AND CHINA AND MAINTAIN QUITE PEACEFUL POSTURE VIS-A-VIS BOTH. CONCLUDES THAT, IN ANY EVENT, MATTER OF US FUTURE IN ASIA DEPENDS LESS ON NATURE OF NORTH AND SOUTH KOREAN REGIMES THAN ON US REGIME "AFTER NIXON" -- WHICH IS "WHOLE NEW DISCUSSION."

INDOCHINA

17. WSJ FINDS "ASTONISHINGLY SIMILAR" LOGIC OF SEN. BUCKLEY THAT PRES. SHOULD RESIGN SINCE IT APPEARS HE WILL FALL INTO HANDS OF HOSTILE FORCES, AND OF GOLDWATER THAT US SHOULD END AID TO SVN BECAUSE COUNTRY WILL FALL TO COMMUNISTS ANYWAY. "CONSERVATIVES" SHOULD AT LEAST BE WILLING TO ADMIT THAT PRES. AND SVN BE ALLOWED TO PUT UP DEFENSE; "GIVEN THAT CHANCE, THEY MAY SURVIVE." NOTES PHNOM PENH STILL STANDS DESPITE OMINOUS WARNINGS ALMOST DAILY FOR PAST 4 YEARS THAT ITS FALL WAS IMMINENT. CONSIDERS GOLDWATER'S FORECAST OF COMMUNIST INVASION OF SVN AS SURPRISING AS HIS READINESS TO SCRATCH COUNTRY OFF, BECAUSE CONSENSUS OF MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES HAS LATELY BEEN SHIFTING AWAY FROM LIKELIHOOD OF ALL-OUT WAR. IMPEACHMENT OF PRES. OR SVN'S COLLAPSE "SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED SO UNTHINKABLE THAT WE SHOULD SPARE NO EXPENSE TO KEEP EITHER FROM HAPPENING"; BUT NEITHER SHOULD THESE PROBLEMS BE DEALT WITH "ON THE CHEAP." MAINTAINS THAT SO LONG AS VN WAR HAS BEEN REDUCED TO MATTER OF MONEY -- SUPPLYING SVN WITH OIL, AMMO AND SPARE PARTS -- SO EASILY SCRATCHING A NATION DEFENDED WITH 50,000 US LIVES HARDLY SEEMS BARGAIN.

GENERAL

18. WP'S VON HOFFMAN CHARGES THAT PRES. AND KISSINGER, DRIVEN BY "DOMESTIC POLITICAL INTEREST" TO DEMONSTRATE THEY CAN BRING WORLD PEACE, ARE PRE-OCCUPIED WITH SOVIET AND HAVE CUT THEMSELVES OFF FROM US ALLIES AND TRADING PARTNERS. "FALLING APART OF RELATIONS

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WITH EUROPE AND JAPAN HAS PROGRESSED FROM VAGUELY
DISTRUBING TO POINT OF SERIOUS CONCERN." HOLDS THAT
FOR 5 YEARS, US TREATED ALLIES TO "UNENDING NUMBER
OF SNUBS, PUBLIC DRESSINGS DOWN AND BOLT-FROM-THE-
BLUE DECLARATIONS. THE LONG-NEEDED RECONCILIATION
WITH CHINA WAS SERIOUSLY DAMAGED BY KISSINGER'S FAILURE
TO CONSULT TOKYO BEFORE HE DID IT..." RUSH

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